(b) the details. of those who have sought asylum and have duly been granted/ refused the same;

(c) whether representatives of Bangladesh Government during the recent Home Secretary level talks in New Delhi broached the issue about several Bangladeshi political persons, their relatives and officials, facing serious corruption charges, escaping the process of law by fleeing to India seeking asylum; and

(d) if so, Government's response thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI V. RADHIKA SELVI): (a) As per available information, the total number of, Bangladeshi nationals, possessing valid passports and other travel documents who came to India between January to March, 2007 is 1,18,687. However, category-wise details/break-up of arrival of persons *viz.* politicians, officials etc. are not maintained.

(b) The Government has not received any request from Bangladeshi nationals seeking asylum during the period in question.

(c) and (d) No, Sir.

Defence imports

*313. DR. K. MALAISAMY: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that our country is the third largest in defence arms imports among the developing countries;

(b) if so, the value of such imports and how much of our requirement, out of the total, is met by imports;

(c) the major countries from which the said imports are resorted to; and

(d) the major benefits accruing on such deals?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI A.K. ANTONY): (a) to (d) India ranks 10th in military expenditure in US Dollar terms in 2006 as per published data.

The total value of expenditure on defence equipment including stores, amounts to Rs.57340 crore approximately for the year 2006-2007. Out of this, expenditure on import amounts to Rs.10022 crore approximately.

Major countries from which the imports are made include Russia, the USA, the UK, France, Germany and Israel.

The import option is exercised only when it is necessary to procure the items within a definite timeframe on operational grounds to bridge the capability gaps and normally when such equipment cannot be sourced indigenously within a specified timeframe.